

Red: Tomatoes

Fruit or vegetable? Botanically, they are fruits, but the U.S.D.A. says they are vegetables. Fruit or vegetable, you should love tomatoes for their cancer-fighting lycopene. Lycopene is a carotenoid (plant pigment) that, as an antioxidant, protects against cancer. Any tomato-based food (fresh, soup, sauce, or juice) is a good choice for your health, although cooked tomato products contain more lycopene than their uncooked counterparts. They're also an excellent source of vitamin C.

Vegetable Pasta with Fresh Tomatoes

Ingredients:

- 3 medium zucchini, washed and ends removed
- 1 medium onion, peeled and chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, peeled and chopped
- 1 tbsp. olive oil
- 1 tbsp. dried leaf basil, crushed
- ½ tsp. coarsely ground black pepper
- 2 cups prepared tomato pasta sauce
- 1 cup chopped fresh tomatoes
- 8 oz. dried pasta, shape of choice
- 1 tbsp. chopped fresh parsley or basil
- grated Parmesan cheese, optional*

1. Cut zucchini in quarters lengthwise and cut into ½-inch pieces. Place zucchini, onion, garlic, and olive oil with seasonings in large, deep skillet and sauté over MEDIUM heat until soft. Stir often.

2. Add prepared sauce, mix well, and let simmer for 5 minutes. Stir in ½ cup chopped tomatoes and allow to heat thoroughly.

3. In a separate pot, cook pasta as directed on package. Drain well and place in large serving bowl. Add sauce and mix gently. Top with the reserved ½ cup chopped tomatoes and chopped herbs. Serve hot.

*Optional ingredient is not included in the dietary analysis.

Nutritional information per serving: 350 calories, 5g fat, 0.5g saturated fat, 14% calories from fat, 0mg cholesterol, 60g carbohydrates, 17g protein, 7g dietary fiber, 370mg sodium.

½ cup of Vegetable Pasta provides ½ serving of vegetables